

THE MILITANT

INSIDE

**Socialist Workers Party conference:
Leading the working class to take power**
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A SOCIALIST NEWSWEEKLY PUBLISHED IN THE INTERESTS OF WORKING PEOPLE

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Join Socialist Workers Party campaigning!

BY ROY LANDERSEN

“SWP campaigners come out of the July 22-24 Socialist Workers Party International Conference better prepared to join in the struggles of working people and point the road forward to building a party that will lead millions to overturn capitalist rule and make a socialist revolution,” John Studer, SWP national campaign director, told the *Militant*.

“They are discussing this road forward with working people on their doorsteps and at picket lines as workers fight to change the conditions we face today. The party’s campaigns are spearheaded by the 20 candidates it has endorsed in elections this year, as well as by Communist League candidates in other countries.”

Days after the conference, SWP campaigners Leroy Watson and Dan Fein spoke with Ben Allen Aug. 1, a retired African American accountant in Bellwood, a working-class suburb west of Chicago.

Fein said there is less racism today among the working class. Allen dis-

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Over 1,500 rally to back coal miners in Alabama

Strike to regain better wages, conditions, safety



United Mine Workers

Striking Warrior Met miners, union and other supporters rally in Brookwood, Alabama, Aug. 4. Fight deserves widespread publicity and active solidarity from all workers and farmers.

BY MAGGIE TROWE

BROOKWOOD, Ala. — Over 1,500 unionists and other workers from Alabama, West Virginia, Kentucky, North and South Carolina, Mississippi, Tennessee, Indiana, Illinois, Georgia and Missouri converged in

cars and buses on the ballpark in this small town where 1,100 members of the United Mine Workers have been on strike against Warrior Met Coal since April 1.

Warrior Met bought the Brookwood mines, which produces metallurgical coal used in steel production, after the previous owner, Jim Walter Resources, went bankrupt six years ago. The new capitalist owners demanded a \$6-an-hour wage cut and other steep concessions on benefits

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D.C. protest: End US gov’t economic war against Cuba!

BY SETH GALINSKY

WASHINGTON — Some 300 people joined a July 25 protest at Lafayette Park near the White House, demanding an end to the more than 60-year-long U.S. economic war against Cuba.

The action welcomed Seattle school teacher Carlos Lazo and other Cuban American participants in the Puentes de Amor (Bridges of Love) “pilgrimage” that started out in Miami June 27. They walked much of the way to D.C. — accompanied by an RV — to draw attention to the fight to overturn the embargo.

They spoke at meetings in churches, to student groups, civil rights activists, and with workers, farmers and others they met along the way, winning new support for the fight to stop the U.S. rulers’ economic, financial and commercial sanctions.

At the rally Lazo held up a stack of petitions with 27,000 signatures calling on President Joseph Biden to end the sanctions against Cuba, to reopen the U.S. Embassy to allow the normal issu-

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Fight to get workers back on the job, defend our jobs and unions



Topeka Frito-Lay Union Members Appreciation Page

Some 600 members of BCTGM Local 218 at Frito-Lay in Kansas returned to work July 26 after three weeks on strike over forced overtime, wages. They won broad solidarity for their fight.

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

While the bosses’ press celebrates a profit bonanza on Wall Street, millions of workers still don’t have jobs, employers are fighting to hold down wages as prices keep rising, and the federal government’s COVID-based bar on evictions has expired.

Changing these conditions requires workers joining together on the job, standing up to bosses’ attacks and waging a political fight for the government

to act now to put millions back to work.

There’s 6.8 million fewer jobs today than before the pandemic began, as bosses continue to drive for profits by intensifying the pace of work. Official unemployment in June was 5.9% and even higher for Black workers, at 9.2%.

This doesn’t include 6.4 million workers who government statisticians don’t count as part of the labor force because they haven’t looked for jobs

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Macron imposes another ‘French values’ attack on working people

BY MAGGIE TROWE

French President Emmanuel Macron is using deadly assaults by Islamists to push through legislation restricting free speech and freedom of worship. The laws make what he calls “separatism” a criminal offense in the name of imposing “French values.”

The Law Reinforcing Respect of the Principles of the Republic passed the French National Assembly 49-19 July 23. It allows the government to shut down houses of worship and dissolve religious organizations if it finds congregants are “provoking violence or inciting hatred.”

It demands religious organizations obtain government permits to operate every five years, and every year if they receive funding from outside France.

The law makes “separatism” a criminal offense, with prison sentences and hefty fines for those who threaten an

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New Zealand gov’t’s ‘save the environment’ law targets farmers

BY FELICITY COGGAN AND PATRICK BROWN

OREWA, New Zealand — Hundreds of angry farmers rode their tractors through 55 towns and cities across New Zealand July 16 in a “Howl of a Protest” against new environmentally motivated restrictions enacted or proposed by the Labour Party government that target farmers.

The action was called by Groundswell NZ, formed in 2020 by a group of

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Aluminum workers strike Rio Tinto in Canada

Rolls-Royce maintenance workers strike, win solidarity

Join SWP campaigning!

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agreed. “Working-class whites are easily tricked into blaming Blacks for their problems,” he told the socialist campaigners.

“Capitalism needs racism to divide and weaken the working class while they exploit us,” Fein said. “The fight against racism today is part of the challenge to unite the working class for coming battles against the capitalist system.”

“The civil rights movement of the ’50s and ’60s changed things forever by smashing the system of Jim Crow segregation,” Watson said. He pointed to the widespread protests on the heels of the killing of George Floyd last year that united Blacks, Caucasians and others. Many of the strikes in the Chicago area over the past two years have included Blacks, Caucasians, Mexicans and others walking the picket lines together.

Allen looked at the back cover of *Tribunes of the People and the Trade Unions* by Jack Barnes, SWP national secretary, and other Marxist leaders. “A tribune of the people uses every manifestation of capitalist oppression to explain why it’s workers and our allies who can and will,” it says, “lay the foundations for a world based not on violence and competition, but on solidarity among working people worldwide.”

“I’ll get that,” Allen said, as well as a subscription to the *Militant*.

In the town of Lake Worth, Florida, Steve Warshell and Nelson Gonzalez campaigned door to door Aug. 1. Most workers there labor in the fields or in vegetable processing industries.

Margarita Gomez, a domestic worker, invited Warshell to join her husband, Joaquín, and their 13-year-old son in a cool spot to talk more. “My husband is

from Cuba and he would be interested in many of your books,” she said.

Joaquín, who works night shift at Walmart, had received a head injury while unloading a trailer. “They treated him worse than if he was one of their livestock. He had to fight for every bit of medical care he got,” she said.

“All I know for sure is that in the United States there is incredible wealth for the rich, but for most of us it’s pure exploitation for life,” Joaquín said. He bought *In Defense of the US Working Class* by Mary-Alice Waters, a leader of the SWP.

To find out more or to join the SWP campaigns, contact the party branch or Communist League nearest you. See directory on page 8.



Militant/Dan Fein
Socialist Workers Party campaigner Leroy Watson, right, discusses historic advances in fight against racism, including on strike picket lines, with Ben Allen, in Bellwood, Chicago, Aug. 1.

Myanmar junta extends crackdown, opposition continues

BY SETH GALINSKY

Six months after ousting the elected government, seizing total power and putting down mass protests, the military junta in Myanmar announced Aug. 1 it was extending its state of emergency for two more years. Aung San Suu Kyi, leader of National League for Democracy, which won the last elections in a landslide, is in prison awaiting trial on trumped up charges.

Junta forces have killed at least 945 people since Feb. 1 and jailed more than 5,400 but haven’t succeeded in silencing opposition.

Many government employees as well as private bank and hospital workers continue to refuse to return to work. Unable to hold large demonstrations in major cities and the central regions controlled by the junta without the risk of bloody repression, young opponents are

resorting to fast moving “flash” protests.

Under these conditions, bosses at foreign-owned garment factories, especially China-based bosses, who dominate an industry that employed more than 600,000 workers before the coup, are replacing permanent employees

with temporary workers and pushing the union out. COVID-19 is rampant in the face of crowded conditions.

In outlying regions, where the military and central government have never exercised complete control, armed clashes with ethnic militias continue.

Cecelia Moriarity: 45 years building communist movement

SEATTLE — Cecelia Moriarity, a 45-year member of the Socialist Workers Party, died here July 23 after a prolonged illness. Moriarity built the party in cities across the country and served on the party’s National Committee for a number of years. She worked in aerospace, meatpacking, steel, garment, rail and coal mining, and was active in unions organizing workers in those industries.

Moriarity worked at the Wilberg Mine outside Orangeville, Utah, in 1984, where coal bosses had a long history of ignoring safety. An all-out drive to reach a production record on Dec. 19 led to a fire that left 19 members of the United Mine Workers and eight management personnel dead. Moriarity was an author of the widely read *Militant* on-the-scene article, “Company Greed Killed Coal Miners in Utah.”

Forty-one party members, supporters and friends attended a meeting here Aug. 1 to celebrate Cecelia Moriarity’s political life. Next week’s issue of the *Militant* will carry a full report.

— EDWIN FRUIT



Moriarity, SWP candidate for governor of Pennsylvania in 1998, campaigning at USX Clairton Works, where she worked.

THE MILITANT

Workers fight divisive Quebec language law

The Quebec government is pushing Bill 96, which will sharpen language divisions and discrimination against working people. This comes after a law targeting wearing religious symbols. The ‘Militant’ opposes these attacks on workers’ rights in Canada and elsewhere.

Militant/Jim Upton
2019 Montreal protest placard: “Muslims, Jews, atheists, Christians — all citizens.”

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DC: End US embargo of Cuba!

Continued from front page
ing of visas, and to end restrictions on travel to the island.

“It’s extraordinary the many people we met who are opposed to the sanctions,” Lazo said. “At the same time, we ended up learning ourselves that it’s not only a blockade against Cuba. Here in the U.S. there is a blockade against minorities, the lack of opportunities, the discrimination.” He pointed to their visit with Black farmer Willie Head in Pavo, Georgia, who told Lazo how the U.S. government denies credit to Black farmers, which has driven many farmers off the land.

During the 2020 election campaign “Biden promised he would lift the sanctions, but he hasn’t,” Lazo said. “We are saying, ‘Yes to Cuba! No blockade!’”

Among the groups co-sponsoring the rally were the National Network on Cuba, Puentes de Amor, CODEPINK, DC Metro Coalition in Solidarity with the Cuban Revolution, Socialist Workers Party and ANSWER Coalition.

A busload came from New York City, including a contingent from the Frente Independentista Boricua, a coalition that backs the fight for independence for the U.S. colony of Puerto Rico.

The U.S. economic war on Cuba, begun in 1960 and maintained by every U.S. president since, Democrat and Republican alike, is taking an increasing toll on Cuba, alongside the worldwide capitalist economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic and the blows these deal to tourist revenue for Cuba.

There are severe shortages of basic medicines; scarcity of food, especially of the foods that Cubans like to eat; and a recent spate of electrical blackouts.

“These are difficult times for the Cuban people,” Sandra Soca, one of the Puentes de Amor walkers, told the *Militant* at the rally. Along with ending financial sanctions, the group is calling for lifting restrictions on travel to Cuba. “They don’t want the American people to see with their own eyes the reality of Cuba and the reality of the impact of the sanctions.”

Socialist Workers Party leader Omari Musa told the rally that the U.S. government has never forgiven the people of Cuba for replacing the Batista dictatorship with a workers and farmers government and making a socialist revolution.

The U.S. economic war and threats of a military intervention “will only serve to unite the Cuban people against the country that is trying to suffocate them,” José Pertierra, a lawyer who supports the Cuban Revolution, told the rally.

Other protests against the embargo, including car caravans, took place the same weekend in Montreal, Paris, Chicago, Dallas and other cities.

Right-wing counterprotest

A counterprotest — called by rightist Miami social-media commentator Alexander Otaola to respond to growing support among Cuban Americans for Lazo’s walk — drew 700 people to the same park. The rightists stayed there overnight, outside the White House, growing to a few thousand the next day.

The anti-Cuba action claimed to speak for protests that had taken place in Cuba July 11 protesting the economic crisis and shortages. Those actions were organized by groups funded by the U.S. government. In several instances, so-called protesters looted stores and overturned vehicles.

“We don’t want food for Cuba. We don’t want remittances. We want freedom,” Otaola demagogically told the crowd outside the White House July 26. “We want intervention” by Washington, he said.

Cuban Americans: ‘No!’ to embargo

A large number of the participants in the rally against the U.S. embargo were of Cuban descent.

“The U.S. government doesn’t let me help my mother, my grandmother. I don’t understand it,” Michel Pérez, a Cuban-born factory worker at his first protest against the embargo, told the *Militant*, referring to U.S. measures that block sending money to relatives in Cuba.

Pérez moved to the U.S. from Cuba five years ago, “not because I oppose the revolution. I support it,” he said. Pointing at the counterprotest, Pérez said that they don’t represent the millions of Cubans living in the U.S., who in their majority oppose the sanctions.

Opponents of the Cuban Revolution “say that the embargo hurts the government of Cuba,” said María Rodríguez, a worker at Costco, from Lorton, Virginia. “But it’s the Cuban people who are being hurt.”

Cubans face effects of 62-year-long US economic war

BY SETH GALINSKY

The U.S. capitalist ruling families will never forgive working people in Cuba for their 1959 revolution that overthrew dictator Fulgencio Batista, who ensured superprofits for U.S. bosses and bankers.

Led by Fidel Castro and the July 26 Movement, Cuban toilers brought to power a workers and farmers government, nationalized U.S.-owned businesses under workers control, guaranteed land for small farmers, outlawed racial segregation and made the first socialist revolution in the Americas.

“The majority of Cubans support Castro,” U.S. State Department official Lester Mallory admitted in an April 6, 1960, memorandum. The solution? Deny “money and supplies to Cuba, to decrease monetary and real wages, to bring about hunger, desperation and overthrow of government.”

That’s been the policy of every U.S. president, Democrat and Republican alike, since.

Washington imposes hundreds of economic and financial restrictions. For instance, any ship that stops at a Cuban port — even for maintenance — is banned from docking at a U.S. port for six months, unless its cargo is specifically exempted from the embargo.

Banks are prohibited from handling many Cuban financial transactions. The risk of fines and U.S. retaliation are so high that many foreign banks won’t take the chance, even when Washington permits the transaction.

Any product with more than 10% U.S. components is banned from being traded to Cuba, unless specifically granted a permit. The Treasury Department claims that permits for medicines and medical devices “are generally approved.” But the Cuban government reports it can’t obtain everything from medicines to hearing aids because of the restrictions and because shipping companies refuse to transport the purchases they are able to make.

Family remittances from Cuban



Militant/Ved Dookhun

Several hundred protesters from East Coast joined July 25 action near the White House to say, “Yes to Cuba! No blockade!” Counterprotesters called for U.S. military intervention.

Hebel Morales said that the right-wing protesters in the park “should be ashamed of themselves, calling for more hardships for their own families in Cuba.” Morales said he thinks some “changes” are needed, but he opposed those protesting against the government in Cuba. “Breaking into stores and stealing, is not the way to go.”

“Lift the embargo and see what happens,” Morales said. “Let the people of Cuba make their own decisions.”

In the evening, 150 people attended a panel at Busboys and Poets restaurant featuring Lazo and other participants in the Puentes de Amor walk. The event was sponsored by CODEPINK.

“We believe in the diversity of the Cuban people who can decide for themselves the future of their country,” walker Soca said. “Our souls cannot be broken. We will keep fighting!”

Rachele Fruit contributed to this article.

Americans plummeted 54% in 2020, from \$3.7 billion in 2019. They dropped further after Western Union shut down its Cuba operations in November 2020, following new measures imposed by the Donald Trump administration.

Moves by Washington to prevent Cuba from receiving oil from Venezuela and other countries have led to factory shutdowns. Farmers are forced to use oxen instead of tractors and face difficulties getting their harvest to the cities. Cuba faces barriers to export trade, slashing the country’s ability to obtain hard currency. Without hard currency, Cuba can’t buy enough raw materials and spare parts to maintain production or get the food it needs.

Washington allows Cuba to buy some agricultural goods from the U.S. But unlike the rest of the world, Cuba must pay up front. No credit is allowed.

The Cuban government reports lost production and higher costs have set back the country \$5.57 billion from

April 2019 to March 2020 alone. This is on top of the impact of the worldwide capitalist economic crisis and the COVID-19 pandemic.

U.S. politicians and pundits across the capitalist political spectrum have jumped on the anti-Cuba bandwagon. *Wall Street Journal* columnist Mary Anastasia O’Grady, a vitriolic opponent of the Cuban Revolution, claimed July 25 that it is a “Marxist myth that sanctions impede Cuban development.” Democratic “socialist” Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, who says she opposes the embargo, lays the primary blame for the difficulties facing working people on the Cuban government.

Cuban revolutionaries don’t claim that the U.S. economic war is the only reason for the challenges they have. But it is a key obstacle.

“Lift the embargo and then we’ll see how we do,” says Cuban President Miguel Díaz-Canel, “how this people will advance.”

Armando Choy, Chinese Cuban general and veteran revolutionary

Armando Choy Rodríguez, a brigadier general in the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Cuba, died July 27. He was one of three Chinese Cuban generals interviewed in the book *Our History Is Still Being Written*, published by Pathfinder Press. The book describes the historic place of Chinese immigrants to Cuba, as well as their contributions to Cuba’s revolutionary action and internationalism.

Choy was a founding member of the July 26 Movement in 1955, led by Fidel Castro. In 1958 he became the leader of the organization’s Student Front in Las Villas province. As a result of his revolutionary activity he was arrested and jailed five times.

In May 1958 he joined the Rebel Army in the Escambray Mountains, eventually fighting under the com-

mand of Ernesto Che Guevara. After the revolution he led one of the units that defeated the U.S.-backed mercenary invasion at the Bay of Pigs in April 1961. He held numerous leadership positions in the army and government. From 1980 to 1982 he was one of the thousands of volunteers who participated in Cuba’s internationalist mission in Angola that defeated the South African white supremacist army.

Choy retired from active duty in 1992, taking over administration of the port of Havana. He was a founding member of the Communist Party of Cuba and of the Association of Combatants of the Cuban Revolution.

The *Militant* will publish an article on Choy’s contributions to the revolution in a coming issue.

Water, power cuts fuel protests against Iran gov't, wars abroad

BY ROY LANDERSEN

Protests against Iran's bourgeois-clerical regime spread from Khuzestan province, home to the country's Arab minority, to cities and towns elsewhere in mid-July. Triggered by severe water shortages and power outages that hit hard on working people, demonstrators protested the Iranian rulers' expansionist foreign policy.

For decades working people in Iran have borne the deadly human and financial costs of military assaults carried out by the regime in Tehran and its allied forces, including Hezbollah in Lebanon and pro-Tehran militias in Iraq, Syria and Yemen.

The Iranian rulers have extended their military and political influence across the region and provided military assistance to Hamas, the reactionary ruling party in Gaza, during the 4,000 rocket attacks Hamas unleashed on Israel in May.

But Tehran's military adventures have been met with protests by working people at home over the past four years, including actions of hundreds of thousands in late 2019.

In July protesters chanted, "Neither for Gaza nor Lebanon, I sacrifice my life only for Iran!" and "Cannons, tanks, fireworks, mullahs must go!"

Despite a crackdown by security forces, the protests were the most widespread in 18 months. Hundreds took to streets July 26 in several areas of Tehran, the capital.

Protests against water shortages began in Khuzestan, in southwest Iran, where the majority Arab population has faced discrimination from Iran's rulers over decades.

The province used to have ample water resources but the government redirected river flows elsewhere. This, coupled with Iran's worst drought in 50 years, has caused severe shortages. The province's dams are only half full. Over 700 villages are now dependent on trucks delivering potable water.

Livestock are dying. In an area with high unemployment and a shortage of government services, the livelihoods of townspeople and farmers have been devastated. And this is a region where 80% of the country's oil and

60% of its gas supplies are located.

Weeks of electrical blackouts there and around the country come on top of an ongoing economic crisis, exacerbated by Washington's financial and trade sanctions. The value of the Iranian rial has crashed, causing inflation to soar to 50% annually. Repeated surges in infections during the COVID pandemic have added to this crisis.

Protests were organized in Saqqez in Iranian Kurdistan; Aligudarz and Kermanshah in neighboring provinces; Isfahan in the center of the country; Bojnourd, Khorasan, a northeastern province; and Mahshahr, a center for the petrochemical industry on the Arab-Persian Gulf. People in Bojnourd chanted July 24, "Don't be afraid, we all stand together."

In Karaj, an industrial city near Tehran, demonstrators chanted, "From Karaj to Khuzestan, unity, unity!" This echoed the calls of protesters in Tabriz, Azerbaijan, in northwestern Iran two days earlier. They shouted, "Azerbaijan is awake, supports Khuzestan!" and "Azerbaijan, Al Ahvaz, unity, unity!" in Turkish. Al Ahvaz refers to the Arab nationality in Iran. Azerbaijanis in Iran have also faced national oppression from successive capitalist regimes.

Security forces used tear gas and live fire against demonstrators in a number of cities, killing at least nine protesters. The regime tries to hide its



Protests erupted across Iran, including in mainly Arab Khuzestan province, above, then to Tehran by July 25, sparked by water, power outages, regime military interventions in region.

brutality by claiming unknown "rioters" fired the shots. It shut down the internet and arrested at least 171 people.

The protests follow the June 18 elections with the lowest voter turnout since presidential elections began in 1980, reflecting growing distrust in the regime. Ebrahim Raisi was elected after the country's Guardian Council disqualified most of his opponents.

Both Raisi, a conservative, and his predecessor, Hassan Rouhani, a reformist, are part of a regime that carried out a counterrevolution in the early 1980s, aimed at consolidating capitalist rule and stifling struggles of working people that erupted in 1979 bringing down the U.S.-backed shah of Iran and

beginning a popular social revolution.

Commentators on the left and right of U.S. politics present the reactionary regime today as a product of those massive mobilizations. The opposite is the case.

Gaining confidence in their own capacities during the 1979 revolution, workers established councils to advance their broad social and political interests. Farmers waged struggles for land, and women and oppressed nationalities fought for their rights.

The cleric-led regime sought to suppress these struggles and carried through a counterrevolution, which they continue to extend abroad through military intervention.

Over 1,500 rally to back coal miners in Alabama

Continued from front page

and job conditions in return for keeping the mines open.

When Warrior Met offered only a \$1.50 an hour wage increase over five years after the strike began, UMW members walked out of the meeting and vowed to continue the strike.

The mood of striking miners and workers supporting them was upbeat during the three-hour rally, where UMW President Cecil Roberts and other union leaders spoke about the stakes in this hard-fought battle.

A bus organized by the International Longshoremen's Association brought dockworkers from Charles-

ton, South Carolina; Mobile, Alabama; and Jacksonville, Florida.

Ken Riley, president of ILA Local 1422 in Charleston, spoke while every union member who came on the bus stood in front of the stage. "We are committed to you," Riley told the striking miners. "We are committed to winning this strike. We watched as you took your strike to Wall Street."

Riley recalled solidarity from the United Mine Workers union when longshoremen were under attack. "Twenty years ago at a rally for the Charleston Five, Cecil showed up and inspired us," Riley said, referring to the frame-up assault charges against

five ILA members after 600 police assaulted a union picket line in January 2000. Riley said he and Willie Adams, president of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union on the West Coast, are discussing more measures to support the strike and call worldwide attention to it.

This reporter traveled to the rally on a solidarity bus organized by the Kentucky AFL-CIO. When Bryan Butler, 60, a Warrior Met striker told Lisa Cook, a Communications Workers of America member at General Electric from Louisville, Kentucky, about why he and his fellow unionists were fighting, she was outraged. "Why aren't we hearing about the way these people are being treated in the media?" Cook asked. "This should be national news!"

Striking miners win solidarity in New York City

BY SETH GALINSKY

NEW YORK — Several hundred members of the United Mine Workers union rallied and picketed outside the offices of BlackRock here July 28 to support striking miners at Warrior Met Coal in Brookwood, Alabama. BlackRock is the largest hedge fund in the world, with \$8.67 trillion in assets, and Warrior Met's largest shareholder.

The Warrior Met miners were joined by busloads of retired miners — many coming from Pennsylvania, Ohio, South Dakota, West Virginia and Alabama — and union members and others from the New York area. They cheered speakers and chanted "No contract, no coal!" and "Warrior Met ain't got no soul!"

Some 1,100 miners have been on strike since April 1 at Warrior Met's two underground mines, coal-preparation plant and other facilities.

"The company has enjoyed revenue in excess of \$3.4 billion" since Warrior

Met was set up, United Mine Workers President Cecil Roberts told the crowd. "But it does not want to recognize the sacrifices these workers made to allow it to exist in the first place. All those billions came up to New York to fatten the bank accounts of the already rich."

"Our strike's about cuts to our wages, our health insurance, getting time and a half for overtime and double time on Sundays," Darrell Goldsby, 46, a roof bolter in the No. 4 mine, told the *Militant*. "We're just trying to get back what we gave up in 2016." He's referring to major concessions in wages, benefits and working conditions the union made to BlackRock and other hedge-fund creditors who took over after the previous boss, Jim Walter Resources, went bankrupt.

It's also about job safety, Goldsby said. "This is a gassy mine. Just before we went on strike we were cutting and hit an area with too much gas and it

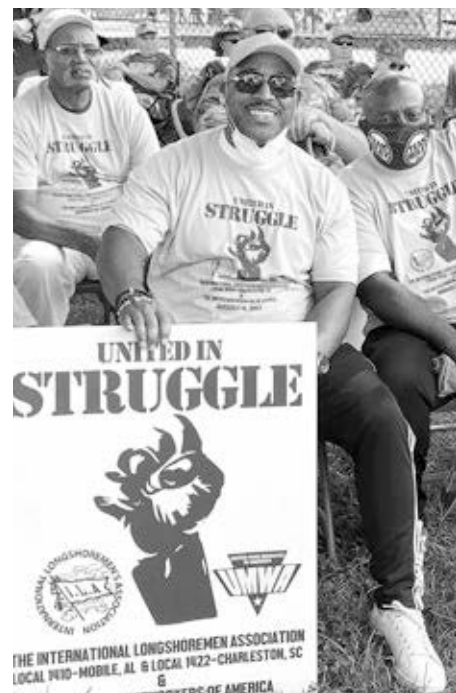
ignited." Goldsby said that miners and their union safety committee have shut down production several times until the company fixed unsafe conditions.

"I can't say it was better when it was Jim Walter," he said. "But with Warrior Met it's like we don't count at all."

"We're underpaid," added Tammie Owens, 44, one of several women workers in the mine. "We're not asking for anything we don't deserve."

"We have bosses telling people to do stuff that is unsafe. I've stepped in and told my union brothers, 'Don't do that,'" she said. "And the bosses make you come to work, sick. The flu, pneumonia. They don't care."

Among the New York unions present were Utility Workers Local 1-2, Teamsters, United Food and Commercial Workers, flight attendants, teachers, stage hands, RWDSU retail workers union and Communications Workers of America.



Militant/Maggie Trowe

Dockworkers at Brookwood, Alabama, rally in solidarity with Warrior Met strikers.

—ON THE PICKET LINE—

Aluminum workers strike Rio Tinto in Canada

Some 900 Rio Tinto aluminum workers in Kitimat, British Columbia, members of Unifor Local 2301, set up picket lines July 25 after their contract expired. The strike followed seven weeks of fruitless negotiations and a 100% strike vote.

The strikers operate Rio Tinto's massive aluminum smelting plant in Kitimat and the powerhouse in Kemano, which furnishes the plant's electricity. Kitimat is on the west coast about 900 miles north of Vancouver.

"Rio Tinto was given every opportunity to reach a fair deal but showed complete disregard for our issues," Local President Martin McIlwrath said in a July 24 news release. "The difficult and demanding work our members do has made this facility a success for generations. We deserve nothing less than an agreement that respects us, and we will stand up for our rights."

Pensions, retirement benefits, health, safety, jobs and respect are key issues. The company is demanding changes to workers' retirement pay and benefit levels, including putting younger workers out of the current more secure defined pension contribution plan into a worse defined benefit plan that would be less costly for the bosses.

Negotiations have also focused on a backlog of more than 300 grievances based on the company's use of contract workers and refusal to hire full-time workers.

Despite the picket lines, the bosses continue to operate the smelter and powerhouse with 265 management personnel under an "essential services" order granted by the British Columbia Labor Relations Board. The bosses say they will run the smelter at 35% of normal capacity until the strike is settled.

Rio Tinto, an Anglo-Australian multinational headquartered in London, is the world's second-largest metals and mining corporation. It produces iron ore, copper, diamonds, gold and uranium,

with 45,000 employees in 35 countries.

Solidarity messages and financial contributions can be sent to unifor2301@unifor2301.org or Unifor Local 2301, 235 Enterprise Ave., Kitimat, B.C. V8C 2C8.

— John Steele

Rolls-Royce maintenance workers back on strike, win solidarity

BARNOLDSWICK, England — Seventeen maintenance engineers who are members of the Unite union at Rolls-Royce's jet-engine plant here have restarted strike action. The bosses have been dragging their heels in implementing a deal with the union to secure jobs through new investments. More workers threaten to join the strike if no resolution is reached.

Over 300 workers at the plant went on strike for nine weeks at the end of last year to stop job cuts at Barnoldswick. They forced the company to agree to keep 350 jobs and pledged there would be no layoffs for two years. Key to winning that strike was strong solidarity from Rolls-Royce workers at other plants.



Members of Unifor Local 2301 on strike against Rio Tinto rally July 28 at company's aluminum smelter in Kitimat, British Columbia, protesting bosses' attacks on pensions, health care, safety.

"The spirit of the workforce and the picketers on strike is really strong," said Unite Regional Officer Ross Quinn. "Community support is really strong also and we'll keep going until we get the resolution that we need."

Five striking biomedical workers from East Lancashire Hospitals NHS Trust came to the join the Unite picket line in solidarity July 22. Biomedical

workers went on strike when hospital bosses failed to honor a pay increase they agreed to in 2019. Union conveners at the Rolls-Royce factories in Inchinnan, Scotland, and Ansty, in the Midlands, came to Barnoldswick to support the pickets the next day.

Messages of support can be sent to ross.quinn@unitetheunion.org.

— Hugo Wils

NZ gov't's 'save the environment' law targets farmers

Continued from front page

South Island farmers. They say the measures, pushed as necessary to protect rural waterways and land, fly in the face of farmers' schedules and environmental measures already in place. "We know what it takes to get clean water and you don't get it through unworkable regulations," said Groundswell co-founder and dairy farmer Bryce McKenzie.

Some 300 farmers and supporters convoyed to this northern Auckland suburb July 16. At a muster in nearby Helensville, organizer Mick Smith launched the caravan with the words, "The last thing [the government] wants is a French-style protest." He was referring to the "yellow vest" protests that swept small towns and rural areas across France 2018-19.

Many participants drove "utes," rugged small utility trucks. A pro-

posed new sales tax on such gas-powered vehicles led many to join the action, including some tradespeople for whom — like farmers — there is no "clean" electric alternative.

"Those who need them will just have to get them, and pay yet another tax," Smith told the *Militant*.

The nationwide action drew both working and wealthier farmers, as well as market gardeners and orchard owners.

Another focus of the protest was government designation of big tracts of land as "Significant Natural Areas," with new restrictions imposed on use of the land.

These areas include 48% of Maori land in the Far North District. After protests in June by both Maori and farmers, the government said it would "review" — but not end — the restrictions.

Farmers also expressed opposition to other government moves, including replacing large areas of productive farmland with pine tree plantings, motivated to offset carbon emissions. Farmers also face being taxed on their agricultural emissions beginning in 2025.

The caravan to Orewa displayed placards reading, "No farmers, no food." Area farmers and small-town residents came out to cheer them.

Smith read a Groundswell statement at the rally here laying out farmers' concerns. He rejected the anti-farmer stance of Climate Change Minister James Shaw, who is also co-leader of the Green Party. Shaw dismissed Groundswell as a "group of 'pakeha' [Caucasian] farmers" who fight "any kind of regulation about what they do to protect the environmental conditions on their land."

Labour Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern was more circumspect, saying the government tries to work with farmers on "climate change" and other "challenges" to ensure "exports continue to fetch a high price." Agriculture is the New Zealand capitalist economy's biggest export earner.

Smith also pledged solidarity with workers such as nurses, doctors and teachers, "who have also been ignored by this government."

The opposition National Party, which had seen its rural electoral base weakened in Labour's 2020 landslide victory, mobilized its members of Parliament to attend the protests.

"If by Aug. 16 we have not seen sufficient moves by the government to address our concerns we will undertake further action," Smith told the rally.

**New York march/caravan
Decolonization for
Puerto Rico
No to Statehood
Sun. Aug. 15, 1 p.m.**

from 149th St. & 3rd Ave. Bronx to People's Church, 111th St. & Lexington Ave, El Barrio

For more info: elfrentep.org/blog

25, 50, AND 75 YEARS AGO



August 19, 1996

The following statement was issued July 31 by Socialist Workers Party candidates for U.S. president and vice president, James Harris and Laura Garza.

Capitalizing on the explosion of Trans World Airlines flight 800 with the loss of all 230 passengers and crew, the administration of William Clinton is spearheading a campaign to curtail democratic rights and push back the right to privacy. Each of these moves must be opposed by the labor movement and young people involved in social protest action.

The measures are being put in place for one reason: to protect the interests of the wealthy minority that rules the United States. The government and the wealthy families it serves recognize that a sharper class struggle is developing.

The labor movement can take this opportunity to step up demands for strict safety measures in the airline industry.



August 6, 1971

Negotiations for a new three-year union contract in basic steel are now going on. The present contract expires July 31, and the union will strike if a new agreement has not been reached by that date.

The demands almost universally talked about is a \$1-an-hour raise right now and a cost-of-living clause to keep wages in line with rising prices. There is also a demand for the right to call local strikes when the companies violate safety rules, introduce arbitrary work standards, and unilaterally change piecework rates.

These are basic questions that working men and women in the steel mills are thinking and talking about. Their demand to vote on any settlement signed in their name and regulating their lives is one way of getting to these questions, of taking control of their own union in order to fight for the most meaningful demands.



August 17, 1946

The second week of the Paris "Peace" Conference ended with another diplomatic triumph of the U.S.-British imperialist bloc in fixing the fate of the defeated Axis satellites. The Stalinists enabled the U.S.-British delegations to appear "more democratic" and thereby to score considerable propaganda gains.

Not a single one of the "defenders" of the small nations took the floor to propose that the small nations have a real voice in deciding the nature of the treaties. Nor has a single delegate taken the floor to demand a peace without revenge, reparations, annexations, new national boundaries, forcible transfer of populations, trusteeships and mandates.

After World War I the Soviet Union, led by Lenin and Trotsky, carried on revolutionary propaganda against the Versailles Conference and decisions, exposing their reactionary imperialist character.

SWP conference: Leading the working class to take power

BY TERRY EVANS
AND JOHN STUDER
SPRINGFIELD, Ohio — “This is a book about the dictatorship of capital and the road to the dictatorship of the proletariat,” Socialist Workers Party National Secretary Jack Barnes said, pointing to *Malcolm X, Black Liberation, and the Road to Workers Power*.

Speaking at the SWP international conference held at Wittenberg University here July 22-24, Barnes added, “It is a book about why this revolutionary conquest of state power by a politically class-conscious and organized vanguard of the working class — millions strong — is necessary.”

“Political power doesn’t simply fall into the hands of the working class and its allies,” Barnes emphasized. “It has to be taken.” This requires building a communist party. At stake is whether working people can act decisively to take power as the crisis of capitalism deepens, and to prevent fascist forces unleashed by an increasingly desperate ruling class from crushing us, with devastating consequences for humanity. This is the party we are striving to build today and in the social and political struggles that lie ahead.

The banner hanging above the conference stage summed this up: “Leading the Working Class to Take Power,” “Join the Socialist Workers Party! Build the Communist Vanguard!”

These themes marked the three main talks at the conference, a series of classes intended to deepen the discussion, conference summaries that concluded the gathering, and a spirited session at the end entitled, “Taking Our Communist Program to the Toilers.”

Three hundred thirteen people attended the conference, including members and supporters of the communist movement in Canada, France, Greece and the United Kingdom. A good many more would have come if government travel bans in Australia, New Zealand, the U.K. and the U.S. had been lifted.

Socialist revolution, Marxist leadership

In his opening political report to the conference, Barnes pointed to the 1917 Russian Revolution and the 1959 Cuban Revolution, the two great socialist revolutions of the imperialist epoch, and the decisive leadership that led them to power — the Bolshevik Party in Russia and the July 26 Movement in Cuba.

Displays highlighting the conference themes and the SWP’s continuity were set up along the side of the meeting hall, beginning with six panels entitled, “The Cuban Revolution — A Socialist Revolution with a Marxist Leadership.” The display highlights Barnes’ editing of the introduction to a *Militant* article to ensure it clearly presented how the socialist revolution unfolded in Cuba. Workers and farmers in Cuba were not only led to take power and make ever-deeper inroads against capitalist exploitation and property relations, Barnes added, but through their own experiences to “recognize the socialist character of these accomplishments and the Marxist politics of their leadership and thus transform themselves in the process.”

“Unless that truth is told,” Barnes added in his conference summary, it has

no meaning. Socialist revolutions can only be led by parties that have been built and steeled in struggle beforehand. Their members are imbued with the program, the courage and audacity needed to lead millions to take power when it becomes both possible and essential in order to prevent the triumph of reaction. Based on the conclusions Karl Marx and Frederick Engels drew from the Paris Commune — the first workers and farmers government ever established — Lenin built the Bolshevik Party in Russia to lead workers to take state power when the time came, Barnes said. Lenin wrote *State and Revolution* to deepen the party’s preparation for these decisive moments. He urged party leaders in Russia to make sure it was printed if anything should happen to him.

Joseph Hansen, a longtime leader of the SWP who visited Cuba in 1960 and for years helped lead the party in understanding and defending the revolution there, explained that timely leadership is crucial. “Problems related to the struggle for power,” Hansen wrote, “cannot be placed in deep-freeze to be brought out ‘when the time comes.’”

Shift since the last conference

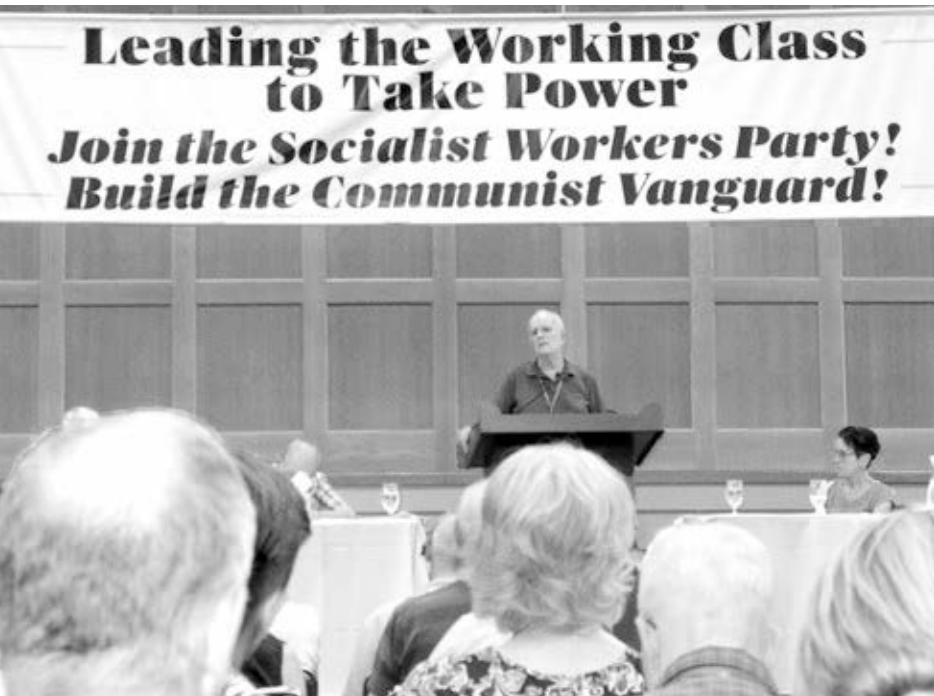
At the last party conference in June 2019, the banner hanging above the platform read, “Advancing Along the Line of March of the Working Class. Act on Imperialism’s Deepening Political Crisis. Build the Labor Movement. Build the Socialist Workers Party.” No one could have foreseen how today’s capitalist crisis would unfold these last two years, Barnes said, but the SWP acted on what that banner said, never missing a beat in going more deeply to the working class and dealing with challenges posed by the pandemic along the way.

While the middle-class “left” disappeared from public activity, retreating to virtual reality, the SWP campaigned widely in the working class, expanded the circulation of the *Militant*, built solidarity with union battles and fights against police brutality and other social struggles. The party inspired its supporters, attracted new, young fighters and stepped up attention to Marxist education. It campaigned for the unions to take the leadership in fighting for workers to get vaccinated, the only road to shutting down the pandemic.

Barnes urged participants to read what Malcolm X said about how he had to transform himself to become a revolutionary leader. A precondition for Malcolm acting on his own worth and that of other working people was turning his back forever on the life he led as an uneducated hustler, thief and pimp.

In prison, he began to read voraciously — starting with the dictionary. He worked his way through classics in literature, history, culture and the “old philosophies, Occidental and Oriental.” He cleaned himself up, realizing that if he did not do so he, known as Detroit Red, would end up dead or as “a bitter convict in some penitentiary” or “hustling, stealing enough for food and narcotics, and myself being stalked as prey by cruelly ambitious younger hustlers such as Detroit Red had been.”

He wrote that his study “awoke inside me some long dormant craving to be



Jack Barnes, SWP national secretary, speaks at conference. SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters, right. Banner captured central themes of conference presentations, classes, discussions.

mentally alive.” On this basis, he strove to set an example, to fight to awaken working people to their self-worth.

Barnes said, “It contributed to making Malcolm X among the most truly educated, capable revolutionary leaders to emerge in the U.S. in our lifetime.”

Refuge for Jews in imperialist epoch

The endurance of Jew-hatred in the imperialist epoch, and its use at times of crisis by the capitalist rulers to divide and crush the working class and its communist vanguard, requires the revolutionary party to champion the fight against it and unconditionally defend the right of Israel to exist today, SWP leader Dave Prince said in the second major conference presentation. It was entitled, “For Unconditional Recognition of Israel as a Refuge for Jews in the Imperialist Epoch: The Stakes for the World Working Class.”

The establishment of Israel in 1948 became inevitable after the Nazi’s extermination of 6 million Jews during World War II; the refusal of the U.S. and U.K. imperialist democracies to open their borders to Jews before, during and after the Holocaust; and the betrayal of revolutions by Stalinist parties in the 1930s as in Spain, and in immediate postwar years in Greece and elsewhere.

“A victorious Spanish proletarian revolution would have stayed the hand of imperialism, stopped the second imperialist slaughter, inspired the world working class, and rearmed German workers and their allies to defeat the fascist regime,” Prince said.

Instead, the Stalinist treacheries prevented governments of working people from coming to power that could have charted a course toward eradicating antisemitism once and for all.

The battle to rid the world of anti-Semitic violence is an integral part of the working-class struggle to take power.

Throughout the 20th century, the communist movement strongly opposed the Zionist movement, which advocated Jews should leave the countries where they were born and establish settlements in Palestine. The Bolshevik Party under Lenin’s leadership fought to build a revolutionary working-class party throughout the czarist empire and advocated the building of revolutionary working-class parties in the Middle East that could unite all toilers — Jewish, Arab, Kurdish, Persian and others — in the fight to overthrow imperialist domination and their own capitalist rulers.

In his book *The Jewish Question*, Prince said, Abram Leon correctly said

the only road to eliminate Jew-hatred is for the working class to take power and carry out socialist revolutions.

But communists don’t complain when the class struggle doesn’t turn out the way they had hoped, Prince said. We recognize reality, and “we lead a way forward, through and not denying what exists.”

The existence — and necessity — of the state of Israel as a refuge for Jews has been settled by the gruesome history of capitalism and Jew-hatred in the 20th century.

For communists, fighting Jew-hatred is not “a cause,” but an inseparable part of the working class’s struggle to take power into its own hands. The primary target of fascist forces that will inevitably be spawned by capitalism in crisis is not Jews. It’s the working class and its communist vanguard. Fascism becomes the capitalist rulers’ last hope to preserve their dog-eat-dog system of exploitation and oppression. Jew-hatred, like anti-Black racism, are tools to sow terror, to mobilize reactionary forces and divide the working class, the only class capable of stopping them. If working-class defense guards don’t stop them, they’ll smash unions and crush the working class.

Historical materialism is crucial

No socialist revolution is possible without advances in working-class consciousness, a product of disciplined struggle side by side with fellow workers. Along the way, it is essential that revolutionary-minded workers acquire a scientific view of world history and the class struggle. “Without Histori-

Continued on next page



Conference participants search through books, build up their Marxist libraries.

Gloria Richardson, fighter for Black rights, Freedom Now Party

BY BRIAN WILLIAMS

Gloria Richardson, a leader in the fight for Black rights in the U.S., died July 15. She was 99.

As head of the Cambridge Nonviolent Action Committee in Cambridge, Maryland, an affiliate of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, she led militant demonstrations that won victories against segregation in housing, schools, and public accommodations and for jobs, despite attacks by white-supremacist thugs and a National Guard occupation, as well as public rebuke from conservative Black leaders.

She publicly solidarized with Malcolm X’s call for the right of self-defense against racist terror. Her admiration for Malcolm led them to collaborate closely during the last year of his life in advancing independent working-class political action, including promoting a national Freedom Now Party, to counter the Democrats and Republicans.

In July 1963, as National Guardsmen were preparing to charge a crowd of Black protesters, Richardson rushed to address the demonstrators. She shoved aside a bayoneted rifle that a Guardsman was pointing at her and walked through, followed by a well-organized defense unit led by young Black men.

Later that month, Maryland and federal authorities, led by Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, drafted a plan to desegregate public facilities that required passage in a referendum



Meeting in Chester, Pennsylvania, hosted by Freedom Now Committee, March 14, 1964, to form Black rights group ACT. From left, Lawrence Landry, Chicago school boycott leader; Gloria Richardson; comedian Dick Gregory; Malcolm X; and Stanley Branche, committee chair.

vote in Cambridge.

Richardson led the CNAC in organizing Black residents not to participate in this referendum. “Why would we agree to submit to have our civil rights granted by vote when they were ours already, according to the Constitution,” Richardson told the media.

At the Aug. 28, 1963, March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, Richardson was chosen to be honored as one of six women “freedom fighters.” But organizers, who fought to water down the speech of Student Nonvio-

lent Coordinating Committee leader John Lewis, had no intention of letting Richardson express her point of view either. When she rose to speak, after saying “Hello” her mic was cut off.

Richardson led CNAC to pay special attention to organizing workers and taking on segregation in the unions. They got involved in successful organizing drives led by the United Packinghouse Workers union. She described how Caucasian workers in the union wanted to learn more about the desegregation fight, and both Black and Caucasian

SWP conference: Leading the working class to take power

Continued from previous page
cal Materialism There Can Be No Working-Class Unity. No Answer to ‘Wokery,’ No Revolutionary Workers Movement,” was the title of the third plenary session talk, given by SWP leader Mary-Alice Waters.

“Historical materialism is under ferocious attack today,” said Waters, “even though you may never hear that world outlook — one of the cornerstones of Marxism — mentioned by name.” The attacks are spearheaded not by the traditional centers of reaction, she added, but by privileged middle-class layers that many consider to be the “progressive” wing of liberal bourgeois democracy.

There is a concerted attempt to negate the scientific world outlook that has guided the revolutionary vanguard of the working class for 150 years and in its place to advance creation myths,

fables, conspiracy theories, contempt for science and rejection of the cumulative cultural patrimony of humanity. This is what underlies much of what we know today as “culture wars,” Waters said.

“Culture wars are at bottom class wars, and they are deepening today above all because the class struggle is sharpening as the crisis of the world order brought into being by the workings of capitalism in the imperialist epoch advances — now accelerated by the COVID pandemic.”

This is the context within which communists carry out our political work today, Waters stressed, and that won’t change substantially until there are new labor struggles of a size and social weight that can demonstrate a different class road forward.

Citing Frederick Engels’ graveside tribute to Karl Marx in 1883, Waters noted, “Just as Darwin discovered the law of development of organic nature, so Marx discovered the law of development of human history: the simple fact ... that mankind must first of all eat, drink, have shelter and clothing, before it can pursue politics, science, art, religion, etc.”

When Waters’ generation joined the SWP, she said, veterans of the communist movement “urged us to read and study, including works such as Engels’ *The Origin of the Family, Private Property, and the State*. They led us to become citizens of time and the world, to understand the ‘long view of history.’” Whatever our backgrounds, “we came to recognize and appreciate the diverse cumulative gains of humanity and to understand that communism will be built on the best of that culture.”

The *New York Times* 1619 Project was one of the examples of the political war on historical materialism addressed by Waters, as well as “cancel culture” and the counterrevolution on women’s rights represented by the campaign to deny the biological reality of two sexes.

The 1619 Project’s principal author, journalist Nicole Hannah-Jones, turns on its head the entire 500-year history of what is today the imperialist United States of America. At the center of her lead article she asserts the “belief, that black people were not merely enslaved but were a slave race, became the root of

the endemic racism that we still cannot purge from this nation to this day.”

In other words, Waters noted, “she asserts that our history has been driven by an *idea*.” It has nothing to do with the fact that “the degree of economic development attained by a given people or during a given epoch form the foundation upon which the state institutions, the legal conceptions, art, and even the ideas on religion, of the people concerned have been evolved.”

Waters noted that the entire piece by Hannah-Jones is a hymn to bourgeois democracy as embodying the highest of human “ideals,” which she claims Black people believe in more than any other segment of U.S. society.

Many of the facts of U.S. history referred to by Hannah-Jones, especially the meaning of the bloody counterrevolutionary crushing of post-Civil War Radical Reconstruction, are things the Socialist Workers Party has educated working people on for decades.

“Our job,” Waters said, “is to raise the discussion to a higher level and explain the unique character of black chattel slavery in the Americas, which didn’t arise out of pre-class society. On the contrary, it was grafted onto U.S. capitalist production for the world market and became a bigger and bigger obstacle to capitalist development, which depends on free wage-labor as the basis of capitalist production.”

Capitalism is the root of “systemic racism” in the U.S., not “white supremacy.”

Classes, supporters meeting, rally

The conference classes included, “Campaigning for Solidarity and Workers Power: How Communists Run in the Elections”; “Black Liberation, the

workers welcomed CNAC’s militant backing. “Black and white people both needed more money and needed a union rather than fighting for the other’s job,” she said in a 1994 interview.

Black unemployment in Cambridge was about 30% in 1961. In response to CNAC’s demands for jobs and equal pay, Black and Caucasian workers from the Rob Roy garment factory invited Richardson to a meeting of their local union, the International Ladies’ Garment Workers Union, to discuss how to fight the wage differences between what they got and the higher pay union officials had gotten for garment workers in New York. The workers prevented ILGWU officials there from ejecting Richardson from the meeting.

Collaboration with Malcolm X

In the first week of November 1963 Richardson attended a meeting of the Northern Negro Leadership Conference in Detroit. But she found the workshops disappointing for not focusing on building a mass movement to address the needs of Black working people. Organizers had refused to allow any discussion on building the Freedom Now Party, so a separate Grass Roots conference was set up simultaneously there.

Upon hearing Malcolm X would be speaking at the windup rally at the Northern Grass Roots Leadership Conference, she decided to go. She received

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Mother Jones: All workers must unite to fight common foe

One of Pathfinder's Books of the Month for August is Mother Jones Speaks: Speeches and Writings of a Working-Class Fighter. From the end of the Civil War until her death in 1930 at age 100, Mary Harris "Mother" Jones tirelessly joined workers' battles — coal miners in West Virginia, garment workers in New York, steelworkers in Chicago, streetcar workers in Texas and countless others. She was targeted and attacked by the bosses, cops and courts, and often jailed. A prosecutor in West Virginia called her "the most dangerous woman in America." The speech excerpted here, "We Must Stand Together," was given to a miners' meeting in Louisville, Colorado, on Nov. 21, 1903. The introduction to the speech was prepared by Philip S. Foner, who edited the book. Copyright © 1983. Reprinted by permission of Pathfinder Press.



"We Shall Fight Until We Win," painting by Lindsay Hand/Mother Jones Museum
Painting of Mother Jones around 1900 leading protest by union workers. Communist leader Leon Trotsky called her a "heroic American proletarian" with "unflagging devotion to working people," noting she had "contempt for traitors, careerists among working-class leaders."

BOOKS OF THE MONTH

Of the 11,000 coal miners in Colorado only about 15 percent were organized, and the UMW launched a renewed organizing campaign in the spring of 1903. Most of the union's members were in the northern field, mainly in Boulder County, while Huerfano and Las Animas Counties, in the southern and more productive field, were almost entirely

unorganized. ... All of the coal fields — almost a half million acres — were owned by two companies: the Colorado Fuel and Iron Company (CF&I) under John D. Rockefeller and the Victor-American Company under Jay Gould.

Colorado miners had good reason to strike. They lived in company-owned houses rarely better than crumbling one-room shacks with bare dirt floors and broken windows and they could be evicted at any moment's notice if they dared protest. They were forced to buy at the company stores where, as in West Virginia, the highest prices in the district were charged. Their wages, moreover, were paid in script, not cash, so they had no choice but to buy everything they needed from the company stores. In addition, the coal they dug, on the basis of which they were paid, was weighed at the end of each day by company weighmen who invariably shortchanged the miners. The miners themselves had no right to check the measurement. ...

The strike covered the entire state. Not a single ton of coal was dug, and the people, feeling the lack of coal in a cold November, put pressure on the operators to settle. By November 15, the operators yielded but only in a way that divided the northern and southern strikers. The offer was for a 15 percent wage increase and an eight-hour day — but only for the northern min-

ers. [United Mine Workers] President Mitchell and his supporters urged acceptance of the offer, and the northern miners met in Louisville to vote on the proposed agreement. Enraged to learn of the impending betrayal of the southern strikers, Mother Jones, accompanied by William Howells, president of UMW District 15, left for Louisville to recommend rejecting the proposed settlement. ...

Mother Jones's speech was brief and to the point. Realizing that the operators and Colorado Governor Peabody had spread propaganda against the Italians, who constituted a majority of the miners in the south, and had tried to get the northern miners, who were mainly American-born, to look down upon the Italians "with disdain," Mother Jones began her speech with a plea for solidarity regardless of language or nationality.

BY MOTHER JONES

Brothers, you English speaking miners of the northern fields promised your southern brothers, seventy percent of whom do not speak English, that you would support them to the end. Now you are asked to betray them, to make a separate settlement. You have a common enemy and it is your duty to fight to a finish. Are you brave men? Can you fight as well as you can work? I had rather fall fighting than working.

If you go back to work here and your brothers fall in the south, you will be responsible for their defeat.

The enemy seeks to conquer by dividing your ranks, by making distinctions between North and South, between American and foreign. You are all miners, fighting a common cause, a common master. The iron heel feels the same to all flesh. Hunger and suffering and the cause of your children bind more closely than a common tongue. I am accused of helping the Western Federation of Miners, as if that were a crime, by one of the National board members. I plead guilty. I know of no East or West, North nor South when it comes to my class fighting the battle for justice. If it is my fortune to live to see the industrial chain broken from every workingman's child in America, and if then there is one black child in Africa in bondage, there I shall go.

I don't know what you will do, but I know very well what I would do if I were in one of your places. I would stand or fall with this question of eight hours for every worker in every mine in Colorado. I would say we will all go to glory together or we will die and go down together. We must stand together; if we don't there will be no victory for any of us.

I know that President Mitchell has sent a telegram to this meeting endorsing a settlement, but John Mitchell is in Boston, we are here in the field. A general cannot give orders unless he is in the field; unless he is at the battleground. Could a general in Washington give order to an army in Colorado? I know, too, that there are those in our union who would have us do nothing to help our brothers in the Western Federation of Miners now engaged in a life and death struggle with monopoly capitalists at Cripple Creek. I want the world to know, and all the papers to print, that I am going to Cripple Creek to speak there tomorrow for the Western Federation of Miners. I am not afraid to be classed as a friend of this organization and all criticism of me on that account falls flat upon my ears.

Goodbye, boys. I shall leave a happy woman if I know that you have decided to stand by our suffering brothers in the South. I will see you again, boys, after I have licked the CF&I. [The northern miners voted 228 to 165 to stay on strike.]

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Bosses know the UMWA's fight at Warrior Met, along with the long record of miners' union battles against unsafe conditions, can inspire support from fellow workers. That's why the bosses and their press imposed a news blackout on the strike.

Like other coal bosses the new owners at Warrior Met used the bankruptcy courts to drive through cuts to wages and raise costs for health care in 2016. They increased use of subcontractors and moved to shortcut safety to speed up production.

All out in support of the Alabama miners!

The federal moratorium on eviction of tenants who owe back rent expired at the end of July. On Aug. 3, Biden had the Centers for Disease Control and Preven-

Richardson later pulled back from active involvement in leading the fight for Black rights. But she never backed off her views.

The new laws, taking advantage of revulsion among working people against the attacks carried out by Islamists, set a precedent for restricting free speech rights. They can and will be used not only against Muslims, the overwhelming majority of whom oppose terrorist attacks, but against labor unions and political groups that oppose government policies.

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